

## Point Count Protocol

What are we doing tomorrow?!

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## Why Point Counts?

- Cost-effective method of estimating the relative abundance of birds
- Least subjective method
- Most reproducible method




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## General Methodology

- A series of points are established in an area.
- Observer visits points during optimal times to detect birds of interest.
- At each point observer records all birds detected (sight & sound), within specified time and distance.

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## Detailed Methodology

- Spacing of Points
  - Place far enough apart to avoid counting birds previously recorded.
  - Standards recommend 250 meters.
  - In more open habitats, 500 meters.

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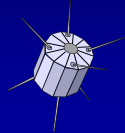
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## More Details

- Marking Points
  - Mark permanently with immovable object (post, metal tag on tree)
  - Locate on detailed map
  - use GPS




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## More Details

- Location of Points
  - For an entire management unit, place points systematically.
  - For specific habitats, stratify area by habitat, and assign points systematically.

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## More Details

### ● Timing of Visits



- Sunrise to about 4 hours after sunrise.
- For breeding birds, best time is from territory formation to early incubation. This is June in many areas, probably March-April in the desert southwest.

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## More Details

### ● Length of Count

- 5 minutes recommended. Can do longer counts (up to 10 minutes) if travel between point count stations is great. Track counts from 0-3 minutes for comparison to other programs such as BBS.
- The longer the count period, the more likely to double count individuals.

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## More Details

### ● Counting Radius

- Fixed radius recommended. Record birds in 0-25 m, 25-50 m, and >50m. Can vary by habitat, with larger radii in more open habitats.




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## What to Record:

- Species - use 4-letter codes
- Distance interval or exact distance
- Age/sex
- Treat flyovers separately




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## Pros & Cons



- Pros:
  - Predominant technique used in North America
  - Recommended by PIF
  - More sample points per effort
  - May detect species missed by other methods

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## Pros & Cons

- Cons:
  - May flush birds as approach point
  - Not as efficient as transects in terms of detections per effort
  - Not useful for secretive, quiet species
  - Gives no information on productivity
  - Does not work equally well in all seasons




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